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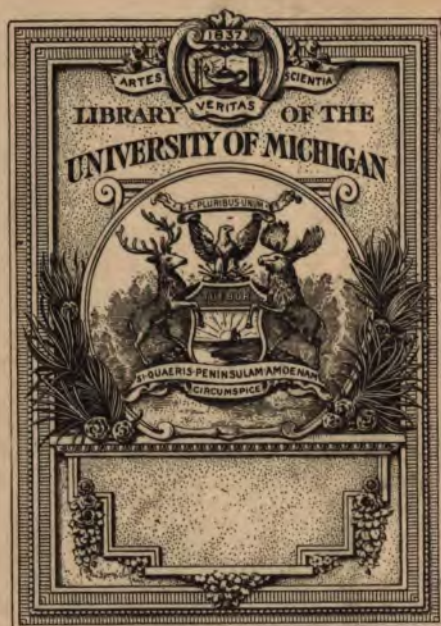
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Our Indian Predecessors  
The First Evanstonians.



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# **Evanston Historical Society.**

## **Our Indian Predecessors- The First Evanstonians.**

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY  
BY FRANK R. GROVER, NOVEMBER 2ND  
1901.

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## Our Indian Predecessors.

Since the discovery of this continent the North American Indian has ever been the subject of constant study, discussion and contention. His origin, his traditions, his character, his manners and customs, his superstitions, his eloquence, the wars in which he has engaged, his tribal relations, his certain destiny, the wrongs he has done and those that he has suffered have for four centuries been favorite themes for the historian, the poet, the philanthropist, the ethnologist. And yet, with all the countless books that have been written upon the subject, there is still room for inquiry, for speculation, for historical research.

Every political division of this country, from state to hamlet, has a mine of untold facts, which must ever remain undisclosed. Still, the diligent and the curious can, with all due regard to the limitations to truth put upon the honest historian, gather old facts that will in the aggregate be of interest as local history,—with that end in view I wish to tell you what I have been able to learn of our Indian predecessors—the first Evanstonians.

### Prehistoric.

It is not my purpose to deal with facts and speculations as to the prehistoric Indian of this locality, or even of the later time, of which there is no written history; that is a subject that should be committed to more able hands, and is of sufficient importance and interest to engage the attention of some archaeologist and this society at some future date. Still, passing reference to a few facts may not be out of place.

In the early days of Evanston, and even as late as 1870, had any curio

hunter climbed the farm fence that then ran east and west in what is now Greenleaf street and carefully examined the ground bounded at the present time on the south by Lee street; on the east by Sheridan Road, and on the west by Michigan avenue, he would have found scattered over about an acre of ground, among the gravel that lay close to the surface, quite a deposit of flints, large and small, and a close inspection would have disclosed that some red man of the stone age or some late time had been there engaged in chipping some of these flints into arrow and spear heads. Most, if not all, of the finished wares had long since found their way into the hands of the manufacturer's customers; still a few, partially completed, were left to tell the story of the workman and his workshop.

During the days of the first settlers arrow and spear heads were frequently found in this locality, especially upon the high ground and along the Ridge Road, while the finding of arrow and spear heads or other stone implements is even now almost a daily occurrence in the town of Niles, to the west of us, and many of these implements can be found among the collections of our citizens and members of this society. Old Indian camping grounds have been located at various places in and near Evanston by the stones cracked by the camp fires and other nearby remains, litter and implements.

In 1866, when the first ground was broken on the college campus for the foundation of Heck hall, portions of two human skeletons, of more than ordinary stature, were ex-

cavated by the workmen; some five or six years ago, when the Rood building was constructed opposite the city hall, the workmen there also dug up a human skull, which was given by them to our city treasurer, Mr. William C. Levere, and which is still in his possession. Members of this society (Dr. Phillips and Mr. Raddin and old residents) have also found Indian skeletons in the bank of the lake front, notably one well preserved, in the piece of ground that now constitutes the yard of Dr. Sheppard's home, at the corner of Sheridan road and Greenwood boulevard.

As to who was the arrow maker on Sheridan Road, or who shot the arrows at deer, buffalo or dusky foe on Ridge boulevard, as to the ancestry, identity and personal habits of the mute tenants of the campus; the cellar of Lord's Enterprise in the Rood building; the bank of the lake front and Dr. Sheppard's door yard. I will leave, as it must be left, to surmise and speculation.

Closely connected with this inquiry are the:

#### **Early Explorers.**

All the writers upon the early history of the northwest of necessity describe in more or less detail the expeditions, exploits and adventures of the explorers and Jesuit missionaries, who first saw the Indians, who were the first white men in Illinois, and who have been the greatest contributors to the history of the Indians of the northern states. Among these the names of James Marquette, Louis Joliet, La Salle, Henry de Tonty, Hennepin and Claude Allouez are so prominent that the youngest student, who has read even the average school history of the day, can give with reasonable accuracy an outline of

where they went, what they saw and what they did.

In most of their travels they were accompanied by friendly Indians as guides and assistants, to whose fidelity and attention we owe quite as much as to the explorers themselves. Reference to the extended travels of these daring and hardy men would be useless repetition, but it certainly is of interest to know that such famous voyagers as Father Marquette, Joliet, La Salle, Tonty and fathers Hennepin and Allouez, with their Indian friends, all in their day and in their turn visited the site of Evanston or coasted its shores in their canoes. To the circumstances of some of these early visits to this locality I briefly direct your attention.

It was in the month of June, 1673, over 300 years ago, when Louis Joliet, educated as a priest, but with more love for exploration and adventure, and James Marquette, who longed to see and trace the course of the great river that De Soto had discovered over 100 years before, and who, godly man that he was, loved still more to carry the tidings of the Christ to the red man of the prairies, with five French companions, in two canoes, started upon that long and toilsome journey through Green Bay, up the Fox river of Wisconsin, from thence into and down the Mississippi and up the then nameless river to the Indian village of the Illinois, where they arrived late in the summer and tarried until September.

The first visit of a white man to Evanston, in September, 1673, is thus described by Francois Parkman in his life of La Salle and the discovery of the great west: "An Illinois chief with a band of young warriors offered to guide them to the Lake of the Illinois, that is to say Lake Michi-



gan, thither they repaired," via the Illinois, Desplaines and Chicago rivers, "and coasting the shores of the lake reached Green bay at the end of September."

The month of November the following year (1674), found Marquette again coasting the western shores of Lake Michigan, accompanied by two white men, "Pierre Porteret and Jacques ——" (Marquette's diary) a band of Pottawatomies and another band of Illinois—ten canoes in all. On his way from Green bay to his beloved mission of the Illinois, to which he had promised the Indians surely to return. Frail and sick in body, but strong and rich in energy and religious fervor, he made this his last voyage, from which there proved to be no return for him. Parkman (La Salle 67, 68) describes the journey: "November had come; the bright hues of the autumn foliage was changed to rusty brown. The shore was desolate and the lake was stormy. They were more than a month in coasting its western border."

Marquette's diary (brought to light nearly two centuries later) gives an interesting account of this journey, describing the land, the forest, the prairie, the buffalo, the deer and other game, the Indians they met, their camp fires at night on shore and their battles with the waves by day, and tells the story of their arrival at the Chicago river on Dec. 4, 1674, and finding it frozen over; but what is of special interest to us, his diary shows almost conclusively that on Dec. 3, the day before, the party landed somewhere near the light house within our present city limits. His notation is as follows:

"Dec. 3, having said holy mass and embarked, we were compelled to make a point and land on account of floating masses of ice."

The only point of land within the day's journey shown upon our present maps and even the maps of those days, including that of Marquette, is what is known today by the sailors as "Gross Point," where the Evans-ton light house stands.

Father Allouez made the same journey in the winter of 1676 and 1677, on his way with two companions to the Illinois country to take the place of Father Marquette in the Illinois mission. They encountered untold hardships, dragging their canoes for many weary miles over the ice floes of the lake and the snow along its shores.

Two years later is the date when white men were next here (November, 1679,) when La Salle, Father Hennepin, the historian of the expedition, a Mohegan Indian, La Salle's faithful servant and hunter, and fourteen Frenchmen, in four large canoes, deeply laden with merchandise, tools and guns, made the same voyage from Green Bay and to St. Joseph, Mich., then called Miami, on their way to the Illinois country, to build a fort and to further establish the trade and colonies of New France. They skirted the entire western and southern shores of the lake, while Tonty proceeded by the western shore.

An interesting account of their adventures, hardships and meetings with both hostile and friendly Indians can be found in Parkman's *Life of La Salle* (p. 142, 150). As the author says: "This was no journey of pleasure. The lake was ruffled with almost ceaseless storms; clouds big with rain above, a turmoil of gray and gloomy waves beneath. Every night the canoes must be shouldered through the breakers and dragged up the steep banks.

"The men paddled all day with no



other food than a handful of Indian corn. They were spent with toil and sick with the wild berries which they ravenously devoured and dejected at the prospects before them."

That they, too, may have camped at night or rested by noonday within the limits of our present city is entirely probable.

"As they approached the head of the lake game grew abundant." Marquette verifies this latter statement, for in his diary (entry of Dec. 4, 1674,) he says: "Deer hunting is pretty good as you get away from the Pottawattomies." And his next entry (Dec. 12) made after arriving at Chicago is further verification. He says:

"Pierre and Jacques killed three cattle (buffalo) and four deer, one of which ran quite a distance with his heart cut in two. They contented themselves with killing three or four turkeys of the many that were around our cabin. Jacques brought in a partridge he had killed in every way resembling those of France."

It was winter time a year later—1680. La Salle had not returned from his memorable and heroic tramp from the Illinois back to Canada. His men had deserted; his goods had been destroyed by mutineers and Indians; Hennepin was on the Mississippi. The Iroquois had dispersed and all but destroyed the Illinois and all that remained of La Salle's party was his faithful lieutenant and friend, Henry de Tonty, and two followers—Membre and Boissondet. Tonty had failed to pacify the Iroquois, had been seriously wounded in battle by them and he and his two surviving companions, without food or shelter fled for their lives. Sick, wounded and maimed, he reached the shores of *Lake Michigan* at Chicago, and he and his companions began their long

northward journey on foot, along the dreary and ice bound shores of the lake to old Michilimackinac. Parkman (life of La Salle, p. 220) thus describes their journey: "The cold was intense and it was no easy task to grub up wild onions from the frozen ground to save themselves from starving. Tonty fell ill of a fever and swelling of the limbs, which disabled him from traveling and hence ensued a long delay. At length they reached Green Bay, where they would have starved, had they not gleaned a few ears of corn and frozen squashes in the fields of an empty Indian town."

A volume could easily be written describing the exploits of the later but still early white and Indian visitors to these shores. The western shore of the lake was the great highway between the Chicago portage and Green Bay and Mackinac. We need not depend upon imagination to paint the picture of the white voyageur and his Indian companion plying the paddle with steady stroke, keeping time to the notes of his boat song, while their birch bark canoes skimmed the surface of the lake, for the Jesuit Relations of those early days will supply the facts.

[These travels along the shore of the lake call to mind the early maps, tracing the shore lines made by these explorers, and a fact of local interest is that in all probability the shore line here at Evanston in the 17th century extended much farther into the lake, how much cannot be told from the maps, as they were not drawn to scale. This fact appears from a large bay shown on the maps immediately north of the site of our city, indicating that the shore to the south has since been washed away. The maps referred to are (1) one called Marquette's map, Hist. of Ills., by Sid-

ney Bresse, p. 78; (2) Map copied by Parkman, found in the "Archives of the Marine" at Paris, dated 1683, "May in fact have been one drawn by Joliet from recollection;" (3) Joliet's earliest map 1673-74" Windsor's Geographical discoveries in the interior of North America;" (4) Haines American Indian p. 344.

On the map first mentioned Marquette locates a copper mine near Evanston. This was probably done from tales of the Indians describing such mines as being to the north and Marquette misunderstanding the distance.]

#### Indian Tribes.

For two hundred years preceding the advent of the white man to Illinois, and for how much longer we do not know, the territory lying between the Mississippi and the Atlantic and from the Carolinas to Hudson Bay was occupied by two great families of Indian tribes, distinguished by their languages. All this vast wilderness with the exception of New York, a part of Ohio and part of Canada was the country of the tribes speaking the Algonquin language and dialects. "Like a great island in the midst of the Algonquins lay the country of the Iriquois." The true Iriquois or Five Nations, often called the Six Nations, occupied central and western New York—and the remainder of this linguistic group contiguous territory to the west, in Ohio and lower Canada. (The only exception to this general statement is the Winnebagoes of Dahcotah stock, who were at Green Bay and in southern Wisconsin, and a few scattering bands of the Dahcotahs, who were at times on the eastern banks of the Mississippi.)

All the Indians who have held and occupied this part of Illinois as their homes, so far back as history tells us,

or that can be ascertained during the past 400 years, were of the Algonquin family, and while scattering bands of the Sacs and Foxes (Outgarnies) Miamis, Ottowas and other Algonquin tribes and also the Kickapoos and Winnebagoes have at times, roamed over and perhaps for very brief periods in roving bands occupied the lands lying along the western shores of Lake Michigan in this locality, the Indian ownership, as indicated by extended occupancy, was confined almost, if not entirely, to the tribes of the Illinois and the Pottowatimies. Therefore, to those two tribes and their eastern enemies, the Iriquois, who at times paid unwelcome visits to their western neighbors, I direct your attention.

It must be borne in mind that Chicago was as important a point to the Indian as it has since been to the white man, partly on account of the portage leading to the Desplaines river and as the lake was the great water highway so also was its western shore an important highway for these Indian tribes when they traveled by land.

(The early explorers and missionaries often mention a tribe called by them the "Mascoutins," and on some of the very early maps of this locality appears the name of such a tribe as occupying parts of northern Illinois. The better opinion is there never was in fact such a tribe of Indians. This word—"Mascoutins"—in the Algonquin language means people of the prairie or meadow country and it was applied, it seems, indiscriminately to indicate the locality from which the Indians it was applied to had emigrated or were located—Haines American Indian, p. 151.)

It is claimed by several writers that from 1700 or 1702 to 1770 the country about Chicago had no fixed Indian



population, but that the only Indian residents were roving bands of Iriquois and "Northern Indians." (See Andreas' Hist. of Chicago; Mason's Illinois.)

#### The Iriquois.

The Iriquois have received the enthusiastic admiration of many writers; the best, and some of the worst, traits of Indian character found its highest development among them; they are designated by one enthusiast as "the Indians of Indians." And they are well worthy of mention in our local history, for, after exterminating and subduing their nearest neighbors, including the Hurons, the Eries and other tribes speaking, the same language, their thirst for conquest led them westward from their far away eastern homes; their war parties penetrated the intervening wilderness of forest and plain, navigated the western rivers and great lakes and destroyed or drove their enemies in terror before them across the prairies of Illinois and along the western shore of Lake Michigan. Distance, hardships, winter, and time expended in travel presented no obstacles to them and they scattered and all but destroyed the great and powerful Algonquin tribes of the Illinois, from which our State takes its name, and as early as 1660 they were known to have pursued their ancient enemies, the Hurons or Wyandots, across our state. (Mason's Land of the Illinois 4.)

The Iriquois are thus described by Parkman (Conspiracy of Pontiac, p. 7): "Foremost in war, foremost in eloquence, foremost in their savage arts of policy" . . . . "They extended their conquests and their depredations from Quebec to the Carolinas and from the western prairies to the forests of Maine." . . . "On the west they exterminated the Eries,

and Andastes and spread havoc and dismay among the tribes of the Illinois." . . . The Indians of New England fled at the first peal of the Mohawk war cry." . . . And all Canada shook with the fury of their onset." . . . "The blood besmeared conquerors roamed like wolves among the burning settlements and the colony trembled on the brink of ruin". . . Few tribes could match them in prowess, constancy, moral energy or intellectual vigor." They in turn and within a quarter of a century (1650-1672) exterminated four powerful tribes, the Wyandots, the Neutral Nation, the Andastes and the Eries, and reduced the ancient and powerful Hurons, from whom the great lake takes its name, to a small band of terror stricken fugitives; their ferocity and torture of captives were revolting traits in their character; they were the worst of conquerors and their lust of blood and dominion is without parallel in Indian history.

Mr. Mason says of them (Land of the Illinois, pp. 113, 114): "Though numbering but 2,500 warriors, their superior weapons and experience in warfare had enabled them to defeat and finally exterminate all their neighbors." . . . They destroyed more than thirty nations; caused the death of more than 600,000 persons within eighty years and rendered the country about the great lakes a desert," and Mr. Mason's statement had ample corroboration.

Such were the Indians who were often transient residents of this locality before the coming of the white man, and their depredations furnish the basis for much of the references to the process of extermination of the Indian among themselves in the white man first see Indian.

The French were never successful in gaining the friendship of the Iriquois tribes, as they were with almost all the other Indians of the North and Northwest, but the Iriquois were the friends of the English and Dutch.

In Colden's History of the Five Nations, printed in the old English style of that day, (1750), the author in describing one of the campaigns between the French and English, in 1693, where Peter Schuyler, a Major of the New York Militia, was in charge of the English and their Indian Allies, the Iriquois, says:

"It is true that the English were in great want of Provisions at that time." . . . .

"The Indians eat the Bodies of the French that they found. Col. Schuyler (as he told me himself) going among the Indians at that Time was invited to eat broth with them, which some of them had ready boiled, which he did, till they, putting the Ladle deep into the Kettle to take out more, brought out a French Man's Hand, which put an end to his Appetite."

The quaint humor in this record of an Englishman eating such French broth in the 17th century, or at any subsequent time for that matter, and loosing his appetite, needs no comment; the author may unconsciously have offered a fair explanation of this circumstance, for he says in another connection "Schuyler was brave, but he was no Soldier."

#### The Illinois.

In the year 1615, five years before the landing of the Mayflower, Champlain reached Lake Huron. Upon his crude map of New France appears indications that he then heard and knew of the far-away prairie land, in which dwelt the tribes of the Illinois—the land of the Buffalo. (Mason

supra) Jean Nicolet saw or heard of the Illinois again in 1638 and two young French explorers again in 1655 (Mason Id); October 1st, 1665, ten years later, the Illinois sent a delegation to attend an Indian Council at the Great Chippewa (Ojibway) Village, on Lake Superior, with reference to war with the Sioux, which Claude Allouez attended and there addressed the many Northern tribes assembled in council, assuring them of the friendship and protection of the French, who would "smooth the path between the Chippewas and Quebec, brush the pirate canoes from the interevening rivers and leave the Iriquois no alternative but death and destruction." (Brown's History of Ills. 115.) There is abundant evidence to show that, during the preceding years, the Illinois had suffered greatly by wars with the Sioux from the West and with the Iriquois from the East.

In 1673 Joliet and Marquette found the Illinois on the Western bank of the Mississippi and on the Illinois River, where there were many villages; one village found by these explorers consisting of 74 cabins each containing several families. In 1675 Marquette paid his second visit to the same locality and "summoned them to grand council on the Great Meadow between the Illinois River and the modern village of Utica. Here five hundred chiefs and old men were seated in a ring, behind stood 1,500 youths and warriors and behind them all the women and children of the village, Marquette standing in the midst," told them the story of Christ and the Virgin (Parkman's La Salle, 69); Allouez visited them again in 1677.

In 1680 Tonty and Hennepin found the lodges of the great Indian town, 460 in number, constructed of poles "in shape like the arched tops of a



baggage wagon, covered with mats of rushes, closely interwoven, each contained three or four fires; the greater part served for two families. The population has been variously estimated at 2,400 families, 1,200 warriors and 6,000 souls. "The lodges were built along the river bank for the distance of a mile, sometimes far more" (Parkman's *La Salle*, 156).

Among the varying estimates as to population of the Illinois tribes (none of them very accurate) one early Jesuit writer (1658) describes their number at "about 100,000 souls, with sixty villages and quite 20,000 warriors" (Mason Id. 4). "Their great Metropolis, near Utica, in La Salle County, was the largest city ever built by northern natives" (Caton, *The Last of the Illinois*. Mr. Mason locates the village four miles below the present city of Ottawa, (*The Land of the Illinois*, p. 44.)

These facts indicate not only a powerful and populous nation, but their cemeteries, traditions, implements and cultivated fields, a long residence in the same locality, how many the years or how many the centuries can never be known.

Their most permanent homes were along the Illinois River, but they seem to have had entire control of all the North Eastern portion of Illinois as far back as any record can be found and to the time of the occupation by the Pottowattimies. The Chicago portage seems to have been a frequent and popular rendezvous and they were so identified with this locality that Lake Michigan was generally known to the early explorers as the "Lake of the Illinois."

The Illinois were a kindly people; hospitable, affable and humane and it was said of them by one of the *Jesuit Missionaries*, "when they meet a stranger they utter a cry of

joy, caress him and give him ever proof of friendship." They lived by hunting and tilling of the soil, raising great crops of Indian corn and storing away a surplus for future use; they were great travelers by land, but, unlike most northern Indian tribes used canoes but little; they had permanent dwellings as well as portable lodges; they roamed many months of the year among the prairies and forests of their great country, to return again and join in the feasts and merrymaking, when their whole population gathered in the villages. These habits of travel indicate that they were frequently along the western shore of the lake.

In September, 1680, soon after La Salle and Tonty reached the Illinois country, and while Tonty was still there, the Iriquois from New York again attacked the Illinois. "With great slaughter they defeated this hitherto invincible people; laid waste their great city and scattered them in broken bands over their wide domain. From this terrible blow the Illinois never recovered." (Caton, *last of the Illinois*; Mason Id. 99, 103.)

During the succeeding century the Illinois, broken in spirit, their courage gone, decimated by drink and disease and scattered by their enemies, struggled with waning fortunes, ending their existence in the historic tragedy of Starved Rock, about the year 1770, from which but eleven of their number escaped.

An Indian boy—a Pottowattime, saw the last remnant of this once proud and powerful nation, brave warriors, their women and little children, huddled together upon the half acre of ground that crowns the summit of Starved Rock; saw the fierce and war-like Pottowattimies and Ottowas swarm for days around them; and perform by the torture of siege

and starvation what they could not do by force of arms. When the little stock of food was gone and despair drove the Illinois to make the last brave dash for liberty in the darkness of the stormy night, he heard the yells and clash of the fighting warriors and the dying shrieks of the helpless women and children. Years afterwards, when this Indian lad (Meachelle) had grown to be the principal chief of the Pottowatimies, he related these incidents to Judge Caton. Let him who cares for tragedy read what the learned Judge says of this,—the last of the Illinois.

#### **The Pottowatimies.**

The Pottowatimies were of the Algonquin tribes. Their power was severely felt by the British when at war with the French and in the later Indian war led by Pontiac. When Allouez and the other Jesuit Fathers first visited Green Bay in 1670 the Pottowatimies were living along its shores, and these Jesuits are probably the first white men who saw them in their homes. Green Bay at that time was their permanent abode, though they roamed far away and extended their visits over much of the territory around Lake Superior, where delegations of them were seen as early as 1665, and in 1670-71-72 by the Jesuit Fathers, whom they frequently visited and invited to their homes at Green Bay. In those days they were not known in this locality, for Joliet and Marquette, returning from the Mississippi and the Illinois country in 1674, met none of the Pottowatimies in this region.

The date when they left Green Bay is not certain, or whether they emigrated from there as a whole or in parties, but it is a matter of history that early in the eighteenth century (authorities differ as to the date) they scattered to the South and East and

thereafter occupied the Southern Peninsula of Michigan, Northeastern Illinois and the Northern part of Indiana. Their advance into Illinois was sometimes accomplished with good-natured tolerance on the part of the Illinois tribes and sometimes accomplished by actual violence. This emigration divided the tribe into two rather distinct classes, so that we often find, even in recent Government reports, the Pottowatimies of Michigan and Indiana designated as those of the Woods and those of Illinois as those of the Prairie or "The prairie band."

The exclusive possession of this territory by the Pottowattimes dates from the siege of Starved Rock and the extinction of the Illinois. The Pottowatimies and Ottawas supposed that the Illinois were accessory to the murder of Pontiac, who was killed in 1769 by an Illinois Indian bribed for the deed with a barrel of whiskey. They loved and obeyed this great Indian chieftain of the Ottawas and wreaked dire vengeance for his death upon the luckless Illinois and the date of the massacre at Starved Rock and their permanent occupation of this territory is generally fixed as soon after Pontiac's death. No record of their permanent residence at Green Bay succeeds this date.

The Pottowatimies were of commanding importance in this locality thereafter and even before, for in 1763 they sent a delegation of 450 warriors to the Algonquin Conference at Niagara Falls, and as we all know, they were the last Indians to yield their place in this state to the inevitable westward march of the white man.

As already stated, the Pottowatimies of the Woods became in time a different people than their western brothers; they were susceptible to the



influence of civilization and religion; took kindly to agriculture to supplement the fruits of the chase.

It was very different, however, with the Illinois Pottowatimies—the prairie Indians. Judge Caton says of them, “they despised the cultivation of the soil as too mean even for their women and children and deemed the captures of the chase the only fit food for a valorous people.” They paid little attention to the religion of the white man.

“If they understood something of the principles of the Christian religion which were told them, they listened to it as a sort of theory which might be well adapted to the white man’s condition, but was not fitted for them, nor they for it. They enjoyed the wild, roving life of the prairie, and, in common with most all other native Americans, were vain of their prowess and manhood, both in war and in the chase. They did not settle down for a great length of time in a given place, but roamed across the broad prairies, from one grove or belt of timber to another, either in single families or in small bands, packing their few effects, their children, and infirm on their little Indian ponies. They always traveled in Indian file upon well-beaten trails, connecting, by the most direct routes, prominent trading posts. These native highways served as guides to our early settlers, who followed them with as much confidence as we now do the roads laid out and worked by civilized man.”

Schoolcraft says they were tall of stature, fierce and haughty.

The portable wigwams of the Pottowatimies were made of flags or rushes, woven and lapped ingeniously together. This material was wound *around a framework of poles, meeting at the top. Through a hole in the*

apex of the roof left for the purpose the smoke escaped from the fire in the centre; the floor was generally of mats of the same material spread around the fire. Their beds were of Buffalo robes and deer skins thrown over the mats. The door consisted of a simple opening covered with a mat or robe.

Chicago was an important rendezvous for them, as it had previously been for the Illinois. There they signed an important treaty with the United States in 1821, ceding some 5,000,000 acres in Michigan and other treaties, which will receive later mention, and here they held in 1835, immediately preceding their removal to the west, their last grand council and war dance in the presence of the early settlers of Chicago and 5,000 of their tribe.

The Ottowas were the firm allies of the Pottowatimies, as were also the Chippewas (Ojibways) and all three tribes were closely related, not only as friends and allies, but by ties of blood and kinship, and they generally joined in signing treaties, some writers assert that they were formerly one nation.

In the war of 1812 the Pottowatimies, at least in part, were against the United States, although they fought the British under Pontiac in 1763. In the Black Hawk war of 1832 they remained true to our Government, although it was with difficulty that some of their young warriors were restrained from joining the Sacs and Foxes. They participated in the Battle of Tippecanoe and stamped their names forever upon the history of Chicago by the Fort Dearborn Massacre. They were not only actively concerned in all the warlike transactions of their time, but among their numbers were some of the most noted orators of history.



#### **Ouilmette Reservation and Family.**

The Ouilmette reservation and its former occupants and owners have been the subject of much solicitude and investigation, not entirely for historical purposes, but more especially that the white man might know that he had a good, white man's title to the Indian's land. The Southern boundary was Central Street, or a line due West from the light house; the eastern boundary the lake; the northern boundary a little south of Kenilworth, and the western boundary a little west of the western terminus of the present street car line on Central Street, from which it will be seen that some 300 acres of the Reservation falls within the city limits of Evanston, while the remainder includes almost the whole of our nearest neighbor to the North—the Village of Wilmette.

The reservation takes its name from its original owner, Archange Ouilmette, wife of Antoine Ouilmette, described in the original Treaty and Patent from the United States as a Pottowatime woman, which she was in fact. The name given the Village — Wilmette — originates from the phonetic spelling of the French name "O-u-i-l-m-e-t-t-e."

There are many interesting facts regarding Ouilmette and his family, some of which I will mention: Antoine, the husband, was a Frenchman, who, like many of his countrymen, came to the West in early days and married an Indian wife. He was one of the first white residents of Chicago; some of the authorities say that with the exception of Marquette he was the very first.

Ouilmette's occupation cannot be more definitely stated than to say that at one time he was an employe of John Kinzie, and in turn Indian trader, hunter and farmer. He was a

type of the early French voyageurs, who lived and died among their Indian friends, loving more the hardships and excitement of the Western frontier than the easier life of Eastern civilization.

It appears from a letter signed with "his mark", written and witnessed by one Jas. Moore, dated at Racine, June 1st, 1839, that he came to Chicago in July, 1790. A fac-simile of this letter, which is addressed to Mr. John H. Kinzie, appears in Blanchard's History of Chicago (p. 574) and contains some interesting facts, both historical and personal. He says:

"I caim into Chicago in the year 1790 in July witness old Mr. Veaux"  
"and Mr. Griano"  
"These men ware living in the county Before the war with the winnebagoes. Trading with them I saw the Indians Brake open the Door of my house and also the Door of Mr. Kinzie's House. At first there was only three indians come. They told me there was Forty more coming and they told me to run. i Did So. in nine days all I found left of my things was the feathers of my beds scattered about The floor. the amount Distroyed By them at that time was about Eight hundred Dollars. Besides your fathar and me Had about four hundred hogs Distroyed by the Saim indians and nearly at the Saim time. further particulars when I See you. I wish you to write me whether it is best for me to come thare or for you to come hear and how son it must be Done"

"Yours with Respect"

his

"Antone X Ouilmette"

"Jas. Moore"

mark

Ouilmette owned and occupied one of the four (4) cabins that constituted the settlement of Chicago in 1803 (the other residents were Kinzie, Burns and Lee) (Kirkland's Story of Chicago, Andrea's Hist. of Chicago, Mrs. Wm. Whistler's letter, written in 1875).

Ouilmette had eight children, four



sons and four daughters, viz:—Joseph, Louis, Francis, Mitchell, Elizabeth, Archange, Josette and Sophia. The names of the children appear in several affidavits, deeds and documents relating to the title to the reservation and in several historical works incident to early Chicago.

Ouilmette was in Chicago at the time of the massacre of the Garrison of Old Fort Dearborn in 1812, by the Pottowattimies, and his family was instrumental at that time in saving the lives of at least two whites. Mrs. John H. Kinzie in her book "Wabun" (the early day) describes the circumstances:

The next day after Black Partridge, the Pottowattime Chief, had saved the life of Mrs. Helm in the massacre on the lake shore (commemorated by the monument recently erected at the place) a band of "the most hostile and implacable of all the tribes of the Pottowattimes" arrived at Chicago and, disappointed at their failure to participate in the massacre and plunder, were ready to wreak vengeance on the survivors, including Mrs. Helm and other members of Mr. Kinzie's family. Mrs. Kinzie says (Wabun p. 235, 240):

"Black Partridge had watched their approach and his fears were particularly awakened for the safety of Mrs. Helm (Mr. Kinzie's step daughter). By his advice she was made to assume the ordinary dress of a French woman of the country" . . . .

"In this disguise she was conducted by Black Partridge himself to the house of Ouilmette, a Frenchman, with a half breed wife, who formed a part of the establishment of Mr. Kinzie and whose dwelling was close at hand" . . . "It so happened that the Indians came first to this house in their search for prisoners. *As they approached, the inmates, fear-*

ful that the fair complexion and general appearance of Mrs. Helm might betray her for an American, raised a large feather bed and placed her under the edge of it, upon the bedstead, with her face to the wall. Mrs. Bisson, the sister of Ouilmette's wife, then seated herself with her sewing upon the foot of the bed."

It was a hot day in August and Mrs. Helm suffered so much from her position and was so nearly suffocated that "she entreated to be released and given up to the Indians. I can but die, said she, let them put an end to my misery at once." When they assured her that her discovery would be the death of all of them she remained quiet.

"The Indians entered and she could occasionally see them from her hiding place, gliding about and stealthily inspecting every part of the room, though without making any ostensible search, until apparently satisfied that there was no one concealed, they left the house." . . . "All this time Mrs. Bisson had kept her seat upon the side of the bed, calmly sorting and arranging the patch work of the quilt on which she was then engaged and preserving the appearance of the utmost tranquillity, although she knew not but the next moment she might receive a tomahawk in her brain. Her self command unquestionably saved the lives of all present." . . "From Ouilmette's house the party proceeded to the dwelling of Mr. Kinzie."

The Indians had just left Ouilmette's house when one Griffin, a non-commissioned officer, who had escaped and had been concealed among the currant bushes of Ouilmette's garden, climbed into Ouilmette's house, through a window, to hide from the Indians. "The family stripped him of his uniform and arrayed him in a

suit of deer skin, with belt, moccasins and pipe like a french engagé," in which disguise he also escaped.

After the massacre, when John Kinzie and all the other white settlers and their families fled from the place, Ouilmette and his family remained and he was the only white resident of Chicago for the following four years, 1812 to 1816. (Kirkland's Story of Chicago; Hurlbut's Chicago Antiquities).

In 1814 Alexander Robinson (afterwards chief of the Pottawottomies) came to Chicago and he and Ouilmette cultivated the field formerly used as the garden of old Fort Dearborn; they raised good crops of corn and sold the crop of 1816 to Captain Bradley, after his arrival at Chicago to rebuild the fort (Andrea's History of Chicago).

He was still in Chicago in 1821. (Andreas Id. Kirkland Id.)

Ouilmette was a thrifty Frenchman. In 1825 he was one of the principal taxpayers in Chicago and paid \$4.00 taxes that year upon property valued at \$400.00, as appears by an old tax roll dated July 25th of that year (Blanchard's History of Chicago, p. 517), from which rate of taxation it would seem that the burden of "taxing bodies," of which we hear so much in these days, began very early in Chicago's history. With one exception, none of the fourteen taxpayers of that year owned property in excess of \$1,000.00. John Kinzie's holdings appear on the same roll as worth \$500.00, while those of John B. Beaubien are set down at \$1,000.00; the lowest man on the list is Joseph La Framboise, who paid fifty cents on property valued at \$50.00, and Ouilmette's taxes appear considerably above the average in amount. He also appears as a voter upon the Poll Book of an election held at Chicago, on

August 7th, 1826, at which election it is said he voted for John Quincy Adams for President. (Blanchard Id. 519), which is the last record I have been able to find of his residence in Chicago.

The Treaty of Prairie du Chien, in describing the boundaries of a part of the lands ceded by the Indians, and dated July 29th, 1823, begins the description as follows:

"Beginning on the western shore of Lake Michigan, at the North West corner of the field of Antoine Ouilmette, who lives near Gross Point, about twelve (12) miles north from Chicago, thence due West to the Rock River," which is the first evidence I have found of Ouilmette's residence in this vicinity. He may have had this "country residence" while living in Chicago, but considering the fact that Chicago was not particularly crowded in those days, the ownership of two homes and a country residence is very doubtful.

John Wentworth says in his reminiscences that Ouilmette's daughter Elizabeth married for her first husband on May 11th, 1830, Michael Welch, "the first Irishman in Chicago." Mr. Charles S. Raddin in a recent paper read before this Society, locates the wedding in the old log house now standing on the lake shore at Kenilworth, built by one John Doyle.

Ouilmette was a Roman Catholic. In April, 1833, he joined with Alexander Robinson, Billy Caldwell, several of the Beaubiens and others in a petition to the Bishop of the diocese of Missouri at Saint Louis, asking for the establishment of the first Catholic Church in Chicago. The petition (written in French) says "a priest should be sent there before other sects obtain the upper hand, which very likely they will try



to do." The early enterprise of the church is demonstrated by the fact that the petition was received on April 16th and granted the next day (Andreas' History of Chicago).

From the foregoing facts it is evident that Ouilmette located in Chicago in 1790, and lived there for over thirty-six years, and that some time between 1826 and 1829 he located within the present limits of Evanston or Wilmette Village and certainly within the Reservation. (He was a young man, about twenty years of age, when he came to Chicago and probably married Archange after his arrival.

Mrs. Kinzie took Ouilmette's daughter Josette with her to the Indian Agency of which her husband was in charge at Old Fort Winnebago in Wisconsin, on her return from Chicago in 1831. She describes her (Wabun 300) as "a little bound girl, a bright, pretty child of ten years of age. She had been at the Saint Joseph's Mission School." Mrs. Kinzie at the time of the Black Hawk War (1832) fled from Fort Winnebago to Green Bay in a canoe and took this same little Josette Ouilmette with her (Wabun 426).

That Josette was a protege of the Kinzie family, and that they took a lively interest in her welfare, further appears from the treaty of 1833 with the Pottawottomies at Chicago. She is personally provided for, probably at the demand of the Kinzies, in the following words: To "Josette Ouilmette (John H. Kinzie, Trustee,) \$200.00." The other children did not fare so well, for the Treaty further provides To "Antoine Ouilmette's children \$300.00."

The Treaty of Prairie du Chien with the Chippewas, Ottawas and Pottawottomies, by which the Reservation was ceded to Ouilmette's wife, was *concluded* July 29th, 1829. Among *other provisions of land for Indians*

and others Article 4 of the treaty provides as follows: "To Archange Ouilmette, a Pottawottomie woman, wife of Antoine, two sections for herself and her children on Lake Michigan, south of and adjoining the Northern boundary of the session herein made by the Indians aforesaid to the United States" . . . "The tracts of land herein stipulated to be granted shall never be leased or conveyed by the grantees, or their heirs, to any person whatever, without the permission of the President of the United States."

The land was surveyed by the government surveyors in 1842, and the Patent therefor was issued October 29th of the same year.

This treaty is of special historical interest, as it is the treaty by which the United States acquired title from the Indians to all of the land within the city limits of Evanston. The tract in which it is included is bounded as follows: Beginning at the north line of Ouilmette's Reservation, or a little south of Kenilworth on the Lake Shore, due west to the Rock River; thence down the River and easterly to the Indian boundary line on Fox River, established by the Treaty of 1816; thence north easterly on that line to Lake Michigan (this latter line is the center of the Street in Rogers Park, known for many years and in our Township records as the "Indian Boundary Road," now unfortunately changed, by direction of the City Council of Chicago, to "Rogers Avenue." It is about half way between Calvary Cemetery and the Rogers Park depot; crosses Clark Street or Chicago Avenue at the site of the old toll gate and Justice Murphy's birth-place on the opposite corner, thence North along the Lake Shore to the place of beginning.)

This Treaty also included a vast territory lying between the Mississippi and Rock Rivers in Illinois and Wisconsin, and was planned with reference to the succeeding Treaty of Chicago in 1833 to finally clear western Illinois and southern Wisconsin of the Indians. By its provisions "the Indians became completely hemmed in or surrounded" . . . "To use a common saying in playing checkers, the Indians were driven into the 'single corner' before they were aware of it." (Haines, p. 554).

This Treaty was the entering wedge, designed as above stated, to eventually oust the Pottawottomies and other tribes from Illinois and Wisconsin and the manner in which its execution was secured reflects no credit upon our nation. If the writers who have investigated the subject can be relied upon, hardly any treaty with the Indians ever made is subject to more just criticism.

That the two sections of land constituting the Ouilmette Reservation were given to Ouilmette's wife and children as a bribe for the husband's influence in securing the execution of this treaty is more than probable.

There is, I believe, no more able authority as to the Indian tribes and languages than Elijah M. Haines, who was for many years speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives, and who spent a portion of each year for many years among the Indians. In his able work "The American Indian" he devotes some ten pages (550-560) to "the ingenious work in over-reaching the Indians" in procuring the execution of this Treaty, from which it appears that plans were laid in advance by the Government's agents to carry it through by electing chiefs to fill vacancies in the Pottawottomie tribe, who were not only friendly to the whites, but who were

parties to a prior conspiracy to dupe the Indians. As the author says, "the jury being thus successfully packed, the verdict was awaited as a matter of form." Mr. Haines seems to have reached this conclusion after careful investigation, including personal interviews with some of the principals, among whom was Alexander Robinson, one of the chiefs, who was elected at the very time the treaty was signed. Mr. Haines sets out a personal interview between himself and Robinson on the subject, which is as follows:

"Mr. Robinson, when and how did you become a chief?"

"Me made chief at the treaty of Prairie du Chien."

"How did you happen to be made chief?"

"Old Wilmette, he come to me one day and he say: Dr. Wolcott" (then Indian agent at Chicago, who planned the deal) "want me and Billy Caldwell to be chief. He ask me if I will. Me say yes, if Dr. Wolcott want me to be."

"After the Indians had met together at Prairie du Chien for the Treaty, what was the first thing done?"

"The first thing they do they make me and Billy Caldwell chiefs" . . . "then we be chiefs and then we all go and make the treaty."

Chiefs Robinson and Caldwell were handsomely taken care of both in this Treaty and subsequent ones in the way of annuities, cash and lands, as were also their friends. Archange Ouilmette, Indian wife of the man designated by Chief Robinson as "Old Wilmette" and her children thus secured the two sections of land constituting the Reservation under discussion, which was, to use a modern phrase, Ouilmette's share of the "boodle," and which shows he was indeed, as already stated, a thrifty



Frenchman. If there was any other consideration for the transfer, I regret to say I have been unable to find it. His prior occupation of a part of the land affords no excuse, for like occupation was the gist of the Indian title to all the lands ceded.

Mr. Haines says of this questionable transaction and of Dr. Wolcott's and Ouilmette's connection with it (p. 557): "In aid of this purpose, it seems, he secured the services of Antoine Wilmette, a Frenchman, who had married an Indian wife of the Pottawottomie tribe, one of the oldest residents of Chicago, and a man of much influence with the Indians and a particular friend of Robinson's."

It is fair to say that Mr. Haines excuses both Robinson and Caldwell for their action in the matter, on the ground that they had long been friendly to the whites and were misled into believing that the integrity of their white friends was as lasting as their own (p. 556).

Ouilmette did not overlook the "main chance" when the Treaty of Chicago (1833) was negotiated. He appears to have been promptly on hand, as he was at Prairie du Chien, for the Treaty not only provides for the donations already mentioned to Chiefs Robinson and Caldwell, to Ouilmette's children and others, but he secured \$800.00 for himself, as the Treaty shows. Whether this was compensation for his hogs that had been "Distroyed" some 30 years before by the Indians, or as further compensation for his prior services at Prairie du Chien, is not disclosed, but it certainly is further evidence of his desire to see that his finances should not suffer in deals made with his wife's relations.

Joseph Fountain, late of Evanston, *now deceased*, father-in-law of ex-Alderman Carroll, says in an affidavit

dated in 1871. "that when he first came here he lived with Antoine Ouilmette; that at that time he was an old man, about 70 years old, and was living upon the Reservation with his nephew, Archange his wife being then absent." . . . "That within a year or two thereafter the children returned and lived with their father upon the Reservation. The children went away again and returned again in 1844." . . . "They were then all over lawful age, had usual and ordinary intelligence of white people and were competent to manage and sell their property." . . .

"That he was intimate with the children and their father and after their return assisted them in building a house to live in on the Reservation." . . . "That during the last twenty (20) years the Indian heirs have not been back there." . . . "That in the years 1852 and 1853 the land was not worth over \$3.00 per acre."

I find by inquiry of Mary Fountain, Joseph Fountain's widow, now a very old lady and living in Evanston, and by like inquiry of Mr. Benjamin F. Hill and others, that the house just mentioned was built of logs, situated on the high bluff on the lake shore, opposite or a little north of Lake Avenue, in the Village of Wilmette, and that the former site of the house has long since and within the memory of old residents been washed into the lake, many acres of land having been thus washed away. Mr. Hill says that this house was at one time occupied by Joel Stebbins, who used it as a tavern.

The affidavit of Mr. Fountain indicates that Ouilmette lived on the Reservation until 1838. His letter of 1839 indicates a residence at Racine. He must have gone there in one of those years. John Wentworth says that he

died at Council Bluffs. I have been unable to find the exact date of his death. Mr. B. F. Hill, however, says that he knew him about the year 1838; that he was then a very old man, rather small of stature, dark skinned and bowed with age; that about that year he went away and that within a year or two thereafter Mr. Hill learned of his death, which seems probable, considering his advanced age.

Mr. Hill says that Mr. Fountain omits in his affidavit one item concerning the acquaintance between Ouilmette and Fountain, viz.: a law suit, in which Ouilmette prosecuted Fountain and others for trespassing upon the Reservation by cutting timber, which resulted unfavorably to Ouilmette; that there was a large bill of court costs which Fountain's lawyer collected by having the Sheriff levy upon and sell a pair of fine Indian ponies belonging to Ouilmette, which were his special pride, and that it was immediately after this incident that Ouilmette left the Reservation never to return.

(The value of the timber probably accounts for the selection of this land by Ouilmette when the Treaty was drawn.)

As already shown, neither Archange Ouilmette nor her children could, under the Treaty and Patent, sell any of the land without the consent of the President of the United States. Consequently there is much data respecting the family, both in the Recorder's office of this County, in the form of affidavits and in the office of the Interior Department at Washington, especially in the General Land Office and the office of Indian Affairs. To some of these documents I refer:

By a petition dated February 22d, 1844, to the President of the United States, signed by seven of the children of Ouilmette, all except Joseph,

it appears that Archange Ouilmette, the mother, died at Council Bluffs on November 25th, 1840 (1839); that six of the children signing the petition then resided at Council Bluffs and one (probably the former little Josette) at Fort Winnebago, Wisconsin Territory; that in consequence of their living at a remote distance the land is deteriorating in value "by having much of its timber, which constitutes its chief worth, cut off and stolen by various individuals living near by." The petition further says:

"The home of your petitioners with one exception is at Council Bluffs, with the Pottawottomie tribe of Indians, with whom we are connected by blood, and that your petitioners cannot, with due regard to their feelings and interests reside away from their tribe on said Reserve."

That they have been put to expense in employing agents, whose employment has not been beneficial.

The petition then asks leave to sell or lease the land, and the prayer concludes in the following words:

"Or that your Excellency will cause the Government of the United States to purchase back from us said Reserve of land and pay us one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre therefor."

"And your petitioners further show that they are now at Chicago on expense, waiting for the termination of this petition and anxious to return home as soon as possible" and request action "without delay."

As the result of this petition and subsequent ones Henry W. Clarke was appointed a Special Indian Agent to make sale of the Reservation, or rather that part of it owned by the seven petitioners, so that a fair price could be obtained, and sale was made to real estate speculators during the years 1844 and 1845. In the correspondence between the various depart-



ments of the Government with reference to the sale appears the signatures of John R. Kinzie, John Wentworth (then member of Congress), William Wilkins, Secretary of War, President John Tyler, W. L. Marcy, Secretary of War; also the signatures of Presidents James K. Polk and U. S. Grant.

The South half of the Reservation, including all that is in Evanston,—640 acres,—sold for \$1,000.00, or a little over \$1.50 per acre. The North Section was sold in separate parcels for a larger sum. The correspondence tends to show that the seven Ouilmette children carried their money home with them, but as the Special Indian Agent had no compensation from the Government and there were several lawyers engaged in the transaction, the amount that the Indians carried back to Council Bluffs can be better imagined than described.

Joseph Ouilmette in the year 1844 took his share of the Reservation in severalty, deeding the remainder of the Reservation to his brothers and sisters, and they in turn deeding his share to him. The share that he took was in the North Eastern part of the Reservation; he secured the best price in making a sale and seemed inclined not only to separate his property interests from his brothers and sisters, but to be more of a white man than an Indian, as he did not follow the family and the Pottawottomie Tribe to the west, and "due regard for his feelings and interests" seemed to have controlled him in adopting the life of a Wisconsin farmer.

An affidavit made by Norman Clark May 25th, 1871, states that Joseph Ouilmette was in 1853 a farmer, residing on his farm in Marilton County, Wisconsin, "about 300 miles from Racine," and that the \$460.00 *he received for his share of the Reservation "was used in and about the*

improvement of his farm," upon which he lived for about seven years, and that he was capable of managing his affairs "as ordinary, full blooded white farmers are"; that from 1850 to 1853 he carried on a farm within two miles of Racine.

It appears from various recorded affidavits that all of the children of Ouilmette are now dead, which may be true. Still it is worthy of note that such affidavits are often made from hearsay and with a view to extinguishing upon the face of the records all possible adverse claims, (one of them still survived in 1892).

While Archange Ouilmette is described in the treaty as "a Pottawatamie woman," Mr. Alexander McDaniel, late of Wilmette, an old resident and one of the earliest settlers (1836) says in an affidavit that she was a half blood Pottawatamie, and that Joseph, her son, was "a  $\frac{3}{4}$  white man and  $\frac{1}{4}$  Indian, as this affiant believes from his appearance." Old settlers seem to differ as to the Indian blood in the Ouilmette family, some claiming that Ouilmette himself was half Indian. The better authorities (among them John Wnetworth, Mr. B. F. Hill and Mrs. Archibald Clybourne, now 89 years old) seem to show that Ouilmette was himself a full blood Frenchman and that his wife as stated in the treaty, was a full blood Pottawottomie.

Of interest also is:

#### **Data Gathered from Old Settlers.**

There is good reason to believe that near the intersection of Ridge Boulevard and Lincoln street there was an Indian battle so long ago that no date can be fixed. There was for many years a mound which Mr. James Carney locates a little southwest of the Saint Paul railway viaduct that so attracted the attention of old settlers,



who called it the "Indian mound," that Joel Stebbins, Paul Pratt and James Colvin some fifty years ago and more dug into it and found quite a collection of "war instruments and skeletons." This may have been the burial place of the fallen warriors of the Sacs and Foxes in some ancient battle, for in later times they have been known to adopt the plan of burying their dead after a battle in a single grave and marking the place by such a mound.

In 1835, when the Carney family first came to Evanston, there was at about the Southwest corner of Davis street and Wesley avenue a log hut, with roof of straw, that is said to have been constructed by Indians and that was in fact inhabited by them (one or two families), for quite a time while hunting in the vicinity.

Immediately North of Sheridan road, where it turns to the West, some two or three blocks North of the light-house, fronting the lake shore and on the property belonging to Mr. Charles Deering, was an Indian Village consisting of from fifteen to twenty wigwams. It must have been quite a permanent place of abode, for they had a corn field there and the mounds showing where the corn grew in rows can yet be seen. Mr. James Carney visited this village when a small boy and has a vivid recollection of the wigwams built of rushes and mats, the Indians, their squaws, the children, the dogs and especially of five or six of the Indians who followed him home after one of his visits to secure a certain black pup to which they took a fancy, which Mrs. Carney, his mother, gave them, much to his disappointment, for he too was fond of the dog. This was done while James was in hiding in a hay stack back of the house.

The nearby burying ground to the

West, along Sheridan Road; another with a few graves in the first vacant lot north of Ingleside, on the bank of the lake, would seem to indicate that this was a permanent village, and further to indicate that in the near neighborhood there must have been others.

One summer about the year 1840 quite a party of Indians came to the Lake shore, at the foot of Dempster street, in sailboats, and made a little, temporary village, where they remained during the summer season, fishing with nets in the lake.

The "Pottawottomie tree," so called, has been a favorite theme of late, and many wordy pictures have been painted of Black Hawk, who was not a Pottawottomie at all, and other red men of note dancing war dances and performing other solemn rites under its far spreading branches. The fact however remains, that no eye witness of these proceedings has survived to tell the story, and as the tree has received the most, of not the only attention in these very modern days of the kodak and the industrious reporter, when, too, the cutting of the surrounding timber has exposed it to view, it is safe to say that such traditions are more nearly related to imagination than they are to memory, or substantial fact.

There is at various places along the North Shore and following closely the line of the old Indian trails some curious trees, most of them large elms, that apparently have been broken down when saplings by Indians to mark the trail; that custom has been followed in other localities, and it is probable here. The trees are invariably large and, if this convenient theory is correct, this work of so marking the trail must have been done a century and more ago.

This society is indebted to Mr. A

W. Watriss, of Rogers Park, for the donation of some very fine photographs of these trees.

#### **Recollections of Mr. Benjamin F. Hill**

Mr. Benjamin F. Hill came to Evanston in 1836 and is now the oldest Evanston settler living. In an interview with our secretary, Mr. Currey, and myself in November, 1900, he gave some interesting data of the early times that are germane to the subject under discussion. He said in part:

"Evanston was quite a hunting ground for the Indians on account of the deer being plenty here."

"On each side of the Ridge and close to it, were two Indian trails, where the Indians traveled north and south. One was about where Ridge avenue now is and the other in the neighborhood of Asbury avenue, or perhaps a little west of that. These trails were so much used that the path was worn more than a foot into the ground from the constant travel, showing that these trails had been used for many years."

"The Indians had winter quarters at Wilmette and lived in wigwams made of poles and mats of rushes. The village was where the Westerfield place used to be, near the present intersection of Lake avenue and Sheridan Road. It was their custom to come there late in the fall and stay for the winter." (This village was composed not only of Indians, but French and half breeds, the Ouilmettes and some of the Beaubains are said to have lived with them part of the time).

"There was also evidence of a like camping place about 300 feet west of Sheridan Road, on Hill street, but I did not see any of the Indians in camp there."

*"There was an Indian burying ground following the general line of*

Sheridan road from near the present location of the Evanston Hospital north to the lake, near Mr. Teufel's place (and the recent purchase of Mr. P. W. Gates.) The burials were not made in any compact piece of ground, but scattered along through the timber" . . . "I have personal recollection of the last burial there; do not remember the Indian's name, but afterwards a plowman turned up, at about the spot where the burial occurred, a steel tomahawk which I think was buried with this identical Indian, which I bought for two shillings and which I now have."

"This Indian's coffin was made of poles or saplings, laid up like a log house and bound together at the corners with withes of bark, and the top was also of poles fastened in like manner. With him was buried his gun and his dog. He was buried in a sitting posture, above ground and facing the east. (See Mr. Hill's account of this in Miss Willard's "Classic Town.")

It is quite possible that this last tenant of this ancient cemetery, was a man of some consequence, for burial in that manner was usual (especially among Sioux) only with warriors. (Haines.)

Mr. Hill is probably in error as to this "good Indian" facing the east, for it was the custom on such occasions to bury the departed with head to the east "that they might look toward the happy land in the west" (Schoolcraft and Haines 385). The fastening of the poles with withes had also a significance with the Indians, for the soul under such circumstances could more easily escape. (Haines 380).

"During the early years of my residence here Indians were coming and going all the time, traveling north and south from Chicago, Green



Bay and other points, including the winter village at Wilmette and to and from the lake on hunting expeditions." . . . "The last band that I remember of seeing was some time in the early forties; they were camping temporarily on the side of the road and at about what is now the intersection of Lake avenue and Eighth street in Wilmette."

"I remember seeing John Kinzie Clark, who had a ranch in Northfield, where he raised ponies, on one occasion, coming along through the Wilmette woods with three or four Indian ponies. He was a great hunter and on this occasion had three or four deer tied onto the backs of the ponies. He was riding one pony and the pony to the rear had his bridle tied to the tail of the pony Clark was riding and the whole string was thus tied together Indian 'file or tandem fashion.'"

"The Indians I have described were all Pottawottomies, Roaming bands frequently camped near my father's house and would call and trade." . . . "There were trails following the lake shore, but those were used very little, if any, by the Indians; they used the trails along the ridge the most. I think those along the lake, through Evanston, were more deer trails than anything else."

#### **Recollections of Later Settlers.**

In later years and even as late as 1870 single Indians and very small bands or families came through Evanston, traveling to and from the North and Chicago following the railroad and the lake. I have personal recollection of such visitors on two or three occasion between 1866 and 1870, when they would camp and spend the night under the oaks at the northeast corner of Sherman avenue and Lake street, but these were not the wild prairie Indians of the olden time, and

their character may be illustrated by an anecdote. A year or two ago I was visiting the summer home of a Kentucky gentleman on Lake Huron. His family had a colored cook—"Aunt Caroline," who had never before been in the North. My friend had in his employ, about his grounds, several half breed Chippewas (Ojibways). The next morning, after "Aunt Caroline's" arrival, one of the children of the family tried to alarm her by saying that the Indians were apt to scalph her, to which she replied: "Law no, honey, them's pet Indians."

[Note:—Since the preparation of this paper, this society has secured a valuable map, published by Albert F. Scharf, of Chicago, locating Indian trails, mounds, villages, etc., in Northern Illinois, "as shown by implements and weapons of the stone age." It is not only an interesting study, but what is of special local interest is the fact that the foregoing locations of villages, trails, etc., by old settlers of Evanston agrees with this map.]

#### **Treaties of 1795, 1816, 1821, 1829, 1833, and the Removal of the Pottawottomies.**

Five important treaties preceded and were effective in divesting the Pottawottomies of their title to this part of the land of the Illinois. The first was the treaty of Greenville, effected by William H. Harrison, as aid de camp to Major General Anthony Wayne, August 3rd, 1795, by which the Indians ceded "one piece of land six miles square at the mouth of the Chikago River, emptying into the southwest end of Lake Michigan, where a fort formerly stood."

Second the treaty of Saint Louis, concluded August 24th, 1816, and negotiated by Ninian Edwards, by which the Indians ceded twenty miles of lake front, directly south of Evanston, and a great adjacent territory



lying to the west and south. The northern boundary of this cession (ten miles north of the Chicago River) is what has been known by Ridgeville and Evanston citizens for some fifty years as "the Indian Boundary line" and "Indian Boundary Road," being in the public highway in Rogers Park, which the Chicago City Council as heretofore stated, recently named "Rogers Avenue," in lieu of its former designation; the southern boundary of the land ceded by this treaty began on the lake shore ten miles south of the Chicago River. The Indians retained by the provisions of this treaty the right to hunt and fish within the tract of land ceded: "So long as it may continue to be the property of the United States." The object of the government in securing this land was said to be "to construct a military road to facilitate the building of the proposed ship canal." (Blanchard supra 419.)

The third of the treaties referred to was the Treaty of Chicago, concluded August 29th, 1821, by which the Pottawottomies ceded some 5,000,000 acres of land in Michigan and thus began the most important cessions of their large domain. It was at Chicago at this time that the Pottawatamie chief Metea made his eloquent and historical speech, so often quoted by Indian historians. It is of interest to show the feeling of the Pottawottomies in regard to parting with their lands. The following quotations are from Samuel G. Drake's "Book of the Indians":

"You know that we first came to this country a long time ago, and when we sat ourselves down upon it we met with a great many hardships and difficulties. Our country was then very large, but it has dwindled away to a small spot and you wish to purchase that." . . . "We have brought all the warriors and the

young men and women of our tribe that one part may not do what the others object to." . . . "Our country was given to us by the Great Spirit, who gave it to us to hunt upon, to make our cornfields upon, to live upon, and to make down our beds upon when we die, and He would never forgive us should we bargain it away. When you first spoke to us of lands at St. Mary's we said we had a little and agreed to sell you a piece of it; but we told you we could spare no more. Now you ask us again. You are never satisfied. We have sold you a great tract of land already, but it is not enough" . . . "You are gradually taking away our hunting grounds. Your children are driving us before them. We are growing uneasy. What lands you have you can retain forever, but we shall sell no more. You think perhaps that I speak in passion, but my heart is good towards you. I speak like one of your own children. I am an Indian, a red-skin, and live by hunting and fishing, but my country is already too small and I do not know how to bring up my children if I give it all away" . . . "We speak to you with a good heart and the feelings of a friend. You are acquainted with this piece of land—the country we live in. Shall we give it up? Take notice it is a small piece of land and if we give it away what will become of us?" . . . "If we had more land, you should get more, but our land has been wasting away ever since the white people became our neighbors and we now have hardly enough left to cover the bones of our tribe. You are in the midst of your red children. We all shake hands with you. Behold our warriors, our women and children. Take pity on us and on our words."

The fourth of the treaties in question was that of Prairie du Chien, concluded July 29th, 1829, ceding the Lake front from Kenilworth to Rogers Park, including Wilmette and Evanston and lands to the west, fully mentioned in references to Ouilmette, his family and Reservation.

The fifth of the treaties mentioned was the final treaty of Chicago, con-



cluded September 26th, 1833. by which the Pottawottomies ceded to the United States all that remained of their lands in Illinois and Wisconsin, ("supposed to contain" the treaty says "about five million acres") and which provided for and resulted in their removal from Illinois and west of the Mississippi.

There is a very numerous class of American writers who have little or no sympathy with the Indian or his supposed rights; they look upon him and the land he has occupied as not only the inevitable, but the just spoil of advancing civilization. It must, however, be a man with a heart of stone that could view without some feeling of sentiment this once proud and powerful nation compelled by circumstance to which they had made no contribution, to desert the land of their fathers and terminate a residence of more than a century and a half, at the demand of more powerful masters.

Chicago in 1833 was an insignificant frontier village, but it was then the scene of a great and historic drama, both picturesque and pathetic. At the time the treaty was concluded an English writer, a gentleman of learning—Charles J. Latrobe, was making a tour of this country and was in Chicago. In a book dedicated to Washington Irving, entitled "Rambler," printed in London in 1835, he describes the scene from which I quote:

"When within five miles of Chicago we came to the first Indian encampment, five thousand Indians were said to be collected around this little upstart village."

"We found the village on our arrival crowded to excess, and we procured with great difficulty a small apartment, comfortless and noisy from its close proximity to others, but quite as good as we could have hoped for." "The Pottawottomies were encamped

on all sides—on the wide level prairie beyond the scattered village, beneath the shelter of the low woods on the side of the small river, or to the leeward of the sand hills near the beach of the lake. They consisted of three principal tribes with certain adjuncts from smaller tribes. The main divisions are, the Pottawottomies of the prairie and those of the forest, and these are subdivided into distinct villages under their several chiefs."

"A preliminary council had been held with the chiefs some days before our arrival. The principal commissioner had opened it, as we learned by stating that, 'as their great father in Washington had heard that they wished to sell their land, he had sent commissioners to treat with them.' The Indians promptly answered by their organ, 'that their great father in Washington must have seen a bad bird which had told him a lie, for that far from wishing to sell their land, they wished to keep it.' The commissioner, nothing daunted, replied:

That nevertheless, as they had come together for a council, they must take the matter into consideration.' He then explained to them promptly the wishes and intentions of their great father, and asked their opinion thereon. Thus pressed, they looked at the sky, saw a few wandering clouds, and straightway adjourned sine die, as the weather is not clear enough for so solemn a council."

"However, as the treaty had been opened, provision was supplied to them by regular rations; and the same night they had great rejoicing—danced the war-dance, and kept the eyes and ears of all open by running and howling about the village."

"Such was the state of affairs on our arrival. Companies of old warriors might be seen sitting smoking under every bush; arguing, palavering or 'pow-wow'ing' with great earnestness; but there seemed no possibility of bringing them to another council in a hurry."

"Next in rank to the officers and commissioners, may be noticed certain store-keepers and merchants here; looking either to the influx of new settlers establishing themselves in the neighborhood, or those passing yet



further to the westward, for custom and profit; not to forget the chance of extraordinary occasions like the present. Add to these a doctor or two, two or three lawyers, a land agent, and five or six hotel-keepers. These may be considered as stationary, and proprietors of the half a hundred clap-board houses around you."

"Then for the birds of passage, exclusive of the Pottawottomies, of whom more anon—and emigrants and land speculators as numerous as the sands. You will find horse dealers and horse stealers—rogues of every description, white, black, brown, and red—half breeds, quarter breeds, and men of no breed at all—dealers in pigs, poultry, and potatoes—men pursuing Indian claim, some for tracts of land, others, like our friend Snipe (one of his stage coach companions on the way), for pigs which wolves had eaten—creditors of the tribes, or of particular Indians, who know that they have no chance of getting their money, if they do not get it from the government agents—sharpers of every degree; peddlers, grog-sellers, Indian agents and Indian traders of every description, and contractors to supply the Pottawottomies with food. The little village was in an uproar from morning to night, and from night to morning; for during the hours of darkness, when the housed portion of the population of Chicago strove to obtain repose in the crowded plank edifices of the village, the Indians howled, sang, wept, yelled and whooped in their various encampments."

"I loved to stroll out toward sunset across the river, and gaze upon the level horizon, stretching to the north-west over the surface of the prairie, dotted with innumerable objects far and near. Not far from the river lay many groups of tents constructed of coarse canvas, blankets and mats, and surmounted by poles, supporting meat, moccasins and rags. Their vicinity was always enlivened by various painted Indian figures, dressed in the most gaudy attire. The interior of the hovels generally displayed a confined area, perhaps covered with a few half-rotten mats or shavings, upon which men, women, children and baggage were heaped pell-mell."

"Far and wide the grassy prairie teemed with figures; warriors mounted or on foot, squaws and horses. Here a race between three or four Indian ponies, each carrying a double rider, whooping and yelling like fiends. There a solitary horseman with a long spear, turbaned like an Arab, scouring along at full speed—groups of hobbled horses; Indian dogs and children, or a grave conclave of gray chiefs seated on the grass in consultation."

"It was amusing to wind silently from group to group—here noting the raised knife, the sudden drunken brawl, quashed by the good-natured and even playful interference of the neighbors, there a party breaking up their encampment, and falling with their little train of loaded ponies and wolfish dogs into the deep, black narrow trail running to the north. You peep into a wigwam and see a domestic feud; the chief sitting in dogged silence on the mat, while the women, of which there were commonly two or three in every dwelling, and who appeared every evening more elevated with the fumes of whisky than the males, read him a lecture. From another tent a constant voice of wrangling and weeping would proceed, when suddenly an offended fair one would draw the mat aside, and taking a youth standing without by the hand, lead him apart, and sitting down on the grass, set up the most indescribable whine as she told her grief. Then forward comes an Indian, staggering with his chum from a debauch; he is met by his squaw, with her child dangling in a fold of her blanket behind, and the sobbing and weeping which accompanies her whining appeal to him, as she hangs to his hand, would melt your heart, if you did not see that she was quite as tipsy as himself."

"It is a grievous thing that government is not strong handed enough to put a stop to the shameful and scandalous sale of whisky to those poor miserable wretches. But here lie casks of it for sale under the very eyes of the commissioners, met together for purposes which demand that sobriety should be maintained, were it only that no one should be able to lay at their door an accusation of unfair dealing, and of having



taken advantage of the helpless Indian in a bargain, whereby the people of the United States were to be so greatly the gainers."

"Day after day passed. It was in vain that the signal gun from the fort gave notice of an assemblage of chiefs at the council fire. Reasons were always found for its delay. One day an influential chief was not in the way; another, the sky looked cloudy, and the Indian never performs an important business except the sky be clear. At length, on September 21st, the Pottawottomies resolved to meet the commissioners. We were politely invited to be present."

"The council fire was lighted under a spacious open shed on the green meadow, on the opposite side of the river from that on which the fort stood. From the difficulty of getting all together, it was late in the afternoon when they assembled. There might be twenty or thirty chiefs present, seated at the lower end of the enclosure, while the commissioners, interpreters, etc., were at the upper. The palaver was opened by the principal commissioner."

"The relative positions of the commissioners and the whites before the council fire, and that of the red children of the forest and prairie, were to me strikingly impressive. The glorious light of the setting sun streaming in under the low roof of the council house, fell full on the countenances of the former as they faced the west—while the pale light of the east hardly lighted up the dark and painted lineaments of the poor Indians, whose souls evidently clung to their birthright in that quarter. Even though convinced of the necessity of their removal, my heart bled for them in their desolation and decline. Ignorant and degraded as they may have been in their original state, their degradation is now ten-fold, after years of intercourse with the whites; and their speedy disappearance from the earth appears as certain as though it were already sealed and accomplished."

"Your own reflections will lead you to form the conclusion—and it will be a just one—that even if he had the will, the power would be wanting, for the Indian to keep his territory;

and that the business of arranging the terms of an Indian treaty, whatever it might have been 200 years ago, while the Indian tribes had not, as now, thrown aside the rude but vigorous intellectual character which distinguished many among them, now lies chiefly between the various traders, agents, creditors and half-breeds of the tribes, on whom custom and necessity have made the degraded chiefs dependent, and the government agents. When the former have seen matters so far arranged their self-interests and various schemes and claims are likely to be fulfilled and allowed to their hearts' content—the silent acquiescence of the Indian follows of course; and till this is the case, the treaty can never be amicably effected. In fine, before we quitted Chicago on the 25th, three or four days later, the treaty with the Pottawottomies was concluded—the commissioners putting their hands, and the assembled chiefs their paws, to the same."

Thus, as so ably described by the English writer, was consummated the transfer by which Illinois ceased to be the land of the Indian. The Indians received as compensation for this vast grant \$100,000.00 "to satisfy sundry individuals in behalf of whom reservations were asked, which the commissioners refused to grant"; \$175,000.00 to "satisfy the claims made against" the Indians; \$100,000.00 to be paid in goods and provisions; \$280,000.00 to be paid in an annuity of \$14,000.00 each year for twenty years; \$150,000.00 "to be applied to the erection of mills, farm houses, Indian houses, black smith shops, agricultural improvements," etc., and \$70,000.00 "for purposes of education and the encouragement of the domestic arts."

One remarkable feature of this treaty is the fact that by its provisions some five hundred to one thousand persons, most of them with no Indian blood in their veins, derived personal gain from the transaction: the allowance and payment of individual claims, ranging in amount from a few

